



The Phoenix Family Readiness Group Newsletter
1st Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division (M)
Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07



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Hello from Taji yet again! It hasn't been that long since you've heard from us last, but that doesn't mean that nothing new has happened since then. In the past two weeks we've continued to get out and talk to the local population to build relationships, celebrated another found IED with the Ironclaw team, and awarded the Brigade's first set of Combat Action Badges to six Soldiers from Bravo Company. We also learned how to fly a Raven (a surveillance plane) and conducted a transition of our Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Company's from the 710th to the 763rd from Fort Leonardwood.



Above: SPC Zimmerman preparing to launch the Raven.

It's interesting to see how our Soldiers have progressed in the past couple months. They are gaining confidence and growing wise in their mission execution.



Above: MSG Pacheco, SGT Lowary and SPC Weihrich standing proudly in front of the new Phoenix Flag Pole.

No matter how the mission changes, we ultimately know we're here to provide the Iraqis a link to a democratic society. Just the smiles on their faces tell us that we're making progress. Thanks for all your support...and yes, we still miss you!

PHOENIX SPOTLIGHT **"BANDITS"**

One of the special tasks of the Special Troops Battalion is to provide security to our EOD Company as they travel the AO to detonate and investigate IEDs. In that, we have established a special platoon of vehicles and personnel whose sole purpose is to escort the EOD outside the gate.

The EOD Security Platoon is comprised of many different soldiers from all the companies within 1st STB. They have taken on a very important

mission that consists of a large area of operations. The soldiers of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Security Section are responsible for the protection and escort of the actual EOD teams within the Raider Brigade Area of Operations (AO). The EOD Teams go out and assess explosion sights as well as detonate unexploded objects called UXO's. The soldiers in the EOD security detail are:

(HHC) SSG Ochoa (NCO In Charge), PFC Clewlow, PFC Meridth, PFC Crawford, SPC Stephens, PFC Johnson (Medics)

(A Co) PFC Stout, PFC Brooker,

(B Co) SSG Seigel, SSG Rozell, SGT Meyar, SPC Berry, SPC Denker, SPC Carson, and PFC Mann.

The security detail escorts the EOD teams to any and all possible IED's within the Raider Brigade AO. While the security detail is on an escort it is the security's mission to insure that the EOD team is escorted in a safe and timely manner to any location within the Raider Brigade. The security detail also escorts the EOD teams to other Forward Operating Bases (FOB)'s within the Ironhorse AO for administration purposes. The EOD security has in its first month of operation conducted 197 escort missions in the Raider AO and 13 escort missions within the Ironhorse AO.



Above: Members of the EOD Escort team just before a mission.

Each soldier within the EOD security just recently received a coin and letter of appreciation from the 710th EOD Company for their outstanding job performance.

The mission that is being conducted by these soldiers is of great importance to the Raider Brigade and the Phoenix Battalion. These soldiers are even more proof that the Phoenix Battalion consists of many professional and outstanding soldiers. **TO DARE IS TO DO!!!!**

“OUTLAWS”



Above: SPC LaBonte and SPC Ross in the middle of a patrol.

The Military Police Platoon in the 1st Special Troops Battalion has some of the best Soldiers in the Brigade. Since the deployment to Iraq, the MP Platoon has been serving the Battalion and Brigade through constant combat patrols throughout the area of operation (AO). If you ask anyone in the battalion, they'd tell you they're some of the most disciplined, motivated group of Soldiers we have. Not only this, they have a vital role in the unit's tactical mission. Their missions range from combat patrols of the Battalion's AO, to being the Quick Reaction Force, and operating an OP.

Although the missions remain the same, sometimes the MPs get the opportunity to work with other units, such as Civil Affairs and Human Intelligence Collection Teams.



Above: PFC Grenstiener preparing for another patrol outside the wire.

The schedule for the MP Platoon, like most combat units is a non-stop 24 hour mission. The platoon is split into three teams. The MP's conduct mounted and dismounted patrols throughout the Phoenix area of operation. They are contributing to the mission of the 1st BCT in a very direct way, ensuring that routes are safe for other Soldiers to travel and that the local population is safe as well. Once Combat patrols are finished the soldiers complete preventive maintenance checks and services on their vehicles and weapons.

When asked what he thought of working these hours and days SPC Richard LaBonte replied "yes its long hours and we work every day but I love my job; this is what being a Soldier is all about - find the bad guys and eliminate them."

SOLDIER SPOTLIGHT PFC CARL HABERSTICK

If you're in tune to the world news at all, you know that civilian contractors

have a huge presence here in Iraq. In fact, they have started doing many jobs that the Soldier's would normally do because the operations are so big. One of the operations they cover down on is cooking and preparing the Dining Facility. Given this, the Army no longer needs to provide Cooks to work and prepare food here in Iraq. What that means for the STB is that we have these highly motivated Soldiers to do other tasks. One of those tasks is serving on the Ironclaw Team.

PFC Carl Haberstick, no longer just an Army cook, is fulfilling his duties here in Iraq as a member of the Ironclaw team. PFC Haberstick is from Huron, South Dakota, where his parents and younger brother Roy still live, and has been in the Army for about a year and a half. He came into the Army because his friends joined and also because he wanted to support the war in action, not just by voting.



Above: PFC Carl Haberstick with the famous "rock" outside the Battalion TOC.

Carl said that he originally had no idea what the Ironclaw mission was, but after just one mission, he felt he had learned more about combat than all his prior training combined. PFC Haberstick said, "there's a lot to be said for real life experience." PFC Haberstick has been present during four found IEDs, one of which he spotted himself. Now that he's

had a walk on the dangerous side, he thinks he'd like to reenlist and reclass for Explosive Ordnance Disposal.

In everything PFC Haberstick does, he says that his motto is to "get the job done right the first time." In this line of work, getting the job done right the first time, saves our Soldiers lives. So next time you think a cook is "just a cook," rethink it, because PFC Haberstick potentially saves a life every time he finds an IED.

COMBAT ACTION BADGE

CAB AWARDEES



Above: Five of the awardees at the CAB Ceremony.

Six Soldiers from the 1st Special Troops Battalion, were recently awarded the Combat Action Badge on February 25th for direct contact with the enemy while on patrol. The Combat Action Badges (CAB) were awarded to the Soldiers by LTC Cross. He expressed in the ceremony how proud he was of the soldiers and especially of the work that the EOD escort team had done to earn the Combat Action Badge.

The CAB is award because during the first Operation Iraqi Freedom and those to follow, many non infantry

soldiers such as tank crews, MPs, and Field Artillery took on the roles of 11 Bravo infantry men. In order to recognize their valor, the Combat Recognition Ribbon was created. As ribbons are generally seen as less prestigious than medals and badges, however, the award was then proposed as the "Close Combat Badge" (CCB). The CCB then became the CAB after a change in its criteria aiming to allow any soldier placed in a combat role to receive it. Thus, on June 29th 2005, General Peter Schoomaker awarded the Army's new Combat Action Badge (CAB) for the first time to five soldiers, to include a female. From that point on, any Soldier being engaged or engaged by the enemy who performs satisfactorily in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement can be awarded the CAB.



Above: Bravo Company CAB Awardees standing proudly with their Commander and First Sergeant.

Five of the Soldiers that received the CAB were from Bravo Company, 1st Special Troops Battalion and the sixth was from Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Special Troops Battalion. The five Bravo Company Soldiers that received the CAB are SSG James Rozell, SSG James Newton, SPC Robert Denker, SPC

Christopher Carson and PFC Andrew Mann. The sixth Soldier from HHC was PFC Rashaun Crawford.

The battalion is extremely proud of these individuals and their courage on the battlefield. Congratulations!



Above: SFC Jones with a local resident.



Above: SPC Fitu enjoying the fruits of the friendly locals – drinking some tea.



To Dare Is To Do

Larry A. Seaman
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army

John W. Cross
LTC, EN
Commanding